

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOME

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM

S E C R E T USUN 3740

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FORM AMBASSADOR SCALI

. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN XF

SUBJECT: STRATEGY FOR ARAB RESOLUTION ON PLO

REF: USUN 3504

SUMMARY: ARAB DRAFT RESOLUTION INVITING PLO TO PARTICIPATE
IN GA PALESTINE DEBATE AS "THE REPRESENTAIVES OF PALESTINE
PEOPLE Z IS PICKING UP SUBSTANTIAL STEAM. ARABS CLAIM

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UP CO-SPONSORS. WE ARE NEVERTHELESS TRYING TO PERSUADE

KEY DELEGATIONS THAT (-) PRECEDENT SHOULD BE MAINTAINED OF NOT HEARING IN PLENARY REPRESENTATIVES ON NON-STATES, AND B) THERE ARE BETTWE WAYS THAN A RESOLUTION FOR ALLOWING INTERESTED PARTIES TO BE HEARD. IF WE FAIL TO HED OFF RESOLUTION, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND US ABSTAIN. END SUMMARY.

1. ARABS CAIM THEIR DRAFT RESOLUTION ON PLO (REFTEL) HAS ABOUT UP CO-SPONSORS AND THAT MANY MORE DELEGATIONS HAVE SAID THEY WILL VOTE FOR IT. WHILE THIS MAY BE SLIGHTLY INFLATED, THERE IS EVERY INDICATION RESOLUTION WILL BE ADOPTED BY HEAVY MAHORITY IF IT IS PUT TO VOTE. EVEN THOSE MOST OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO NON-STATES APPEARING IN PLENARY AND TO PREJUDICIAL LANGUAGE ON PLO AS REPRESENTING PALESTINIANS SEEM PREPATED TO ACQUIESCE. FOR EXAMPLE, EC-9 MISSIONS OCTOBER 3 REACHED CONSENSUS THAT ARAB DRAFT WAS OBJECTIONABLE, BUT NOTHING COULD OR SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT IT. THIS HAS NOT YET BEEN TRANSLATED INTO COMMON DECISION BY NINE TO BOTE FOR RESOLUTION, BUT ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL BE UNLESS US WORKED HARD FOR ABSTENTIONS HERE AND IN CAPITALS.

2. IN MISSION'S VIEW, THERE IS STILL AN OUTSIDE CHANCE, REMOTE BUT WORTH PURSUING, OF HEADING OFF DRAFT WITHOUT UNDULY ANTAGONIZING ARABS. STRATEGY WOULD BE TO WORK THROUGH EUROPEANAS AND FEW KEY LATIN AND AFRICAN DELS TO PERSUADE ARABS THAT A) PLO DOES NOT NEED EITHER A RESOLUTION OR APPEARANCE IN PLENARY TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES AND B) PLO WILL ANTAGONZIE IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT AT THE OUTSET IF IT PRESSES AHEAD WITH PRESNET TACTICS. ARGUMENT WOULD BE IN LOW KEY AND WOULD BE PUT ON PROCEDURAL AND JURIDICAL GROUNDS.

3. ON PLENARY QUESTION, LINE WOULD BE THAT PLO CAN ACHIEVE WHAT IT SEES AT ITS MAIN GOAL OF MOVING UN CONSIDERATION ON PALESTINAIANS FROM REFUGEE STATUS TO POLITICAL CONTEXT IN FIRST (POLITICAL) COMMITTEE AS EFFECTIVELY AS IN PLENARY WITHOUT CREATING DANGEROUS PRECEDENT. (SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE, WHERE UNRWA AND OTHER REFUGEE QUESTIONS ARE CONSIDERED , WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO ARABS.) ON QEUSTION OF ARESOLUTION, REASONING WOULD BE THAT FORMAL RESOLUTION IS NOT ONLY UNNECESSARY AND PROCEDURALLY ABNORMAL, BUT IT REAISES KEY SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION LONG BEFORE DEBATE ON SUB-STANCE IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN. WISER PROCEDURE WOULD BE FOR GA TO AGREE TO HEAR PLO WITHOUT OBJECTION AFTER GA PRESIDENT BOUTEFLIKA

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ORALLY RELAYED REQUEST THAT PLO PARTICIAPTE. THIS SCENARIO WOULD DEPEND ON PERSUADING BOUTEFLIKA TO SAY AT SAME TIME (ON OCT. 14) HE UNDERSTOOD CONSENSUS OF ASSEMBLY WAS TO HEAR PLO IN FIRST COMMITTEE, THEN RESUME CONSIEERATION OF ITEM

IN PLENARY. CRITICAL FACTOR IS OF COURSE WHETHER ISRAELIS WOULD CHALLENGE "NO OBJECTION" FORMULA. THE HAVE HINDTED TO US

THEY WOULD NOT.

4. WE WOULD NOT GIVE THIS STRATEGY EVEN AN OUTSIDE CHANGE OF SUCCESS WERE IT NOT FOR TWO FACTORS. FIRST, UNDERSECRETARY FOR GA AFFAIRS MORSE AND LEGAL ADVISER SYY (PROTECT BOTH) ARE BOTH WORKING HARD ON BOUTEFLIKA, BOTH DIRECTLY AND THROUGH SYG, TO CONVINCE HIM OF REAL DANGER TO UN OF OPENING PLENARY TO FLOOD OF DISSIDENT GROUPS. SECOND, THERE IS CHANCE ARAB DELS AND PLO MIGHT DECIDE A CONSENSUS IS IN THEIR INTEREST IF THEY FIND A RESOLUTION WOULD RESULT IN 20 OR SO ABSTENTIONS, INCLUDING IMPORTANT GOVERNMENTS. WITH STRONG EFFORTS IN NEW YORK AND CAPITALS, WE THINK THAT MANY ABSTENTIONS MIGHT BE OBTAINED.

5. AT WORKING LEVEL, WE HAVE INFORMALLY DISCUSSED ABOVE SCENARIO WITH EUROPEANS, CANADIANS, AUSTRALIANS AND FEW FRIENDLY AFRICANS AND LATIN DELEGATIONS. REACTIONS WERE GENERALLY INTERESTED AND MILDLY FAVORABLE. CANADIANS WERE THE MOST ENTHUSIASTIC, VIEWING STRATEGY AS ONLY VIABLE ALTERNATIVE PUT FORWARD SO FAR TO OBJECTIONABLE ARAB PROCEDURES. BRITISH AND GERMAN MISSIONS WILL NEED STRONG STIFFENING FROM THEIR FOREIGN OFFICES BEFORE THEY WILL BUCK FRENCH DO-NOTHING POSTURE. NETHERLANDS AMB. KAUFMANN EMPHASIZED TO ME, DURING CALL AT HIS REQUEST OCT 3, THAT NOTHING COULD BE EXPECTED FROM NINE IN ABSENCE OF APPROACHES IN CAPITALS. SOME OF THOSE OPPOSING RESOLUTION HAVE SUGGESTED IT BE AMENDED; GIVEN SOLID ARAB LEAGUE AGREEMENT ON TEXT, WE THINK THIS UNREALISTIC.

6. WE PROPOSE TO CONTINUE ABOVE APPROACH AND WE PLAN TO SPEAK TO SELECTED AMBASSADORS EARLY NEXT WEEK, ADDING THAT IF RESOLUTION IS PRESSED TO A VOTE WE HOPE THEY WILL AT LEAST ABSTAIN. I RECOMMEND SIMILAR INSTRUCTIONS BE SENT TO OTTAWA, CANBERRA AND EC NINE CAPITALS.

7. SHOULD ARABS INSIST ON PLENARY APPEARANCE AND PRESS THEIR RESOLUTION TO VOTE DESPITE OUR EFFORTS, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND US ABSTAIN WITH EXPLANATION OF VOTE. A NEGATIVE VOTE ALMOST
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CERTAINLY WOULD ISOLATE USG IN COMPANY WITH ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA, THE PRE-OCTOBER WAR LINE-UP. I AM CONVINCED SUCH A VOTE WOULD BE REGARDED BY ARAB COUNTRIES AS A CLEAR SIGNAL THAT THE US HAD ABANDONED ITS IMPARTIAL ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, COMPLICATING YOUR PEACEMAKING EFFORTS. ISRAEL COULD HAVE NO JUSTIFIABLE QUARREL WITH AN ABSTENTION EVEN THOUGH IT UNDOUBTEDLY WILL COMPLAIN. THE US WOULD HAVE DONE ITS UTMOST TO BLOCK BOTH THE RESOLUTION AND PLO APPEARANCES IN PLENARY. HAVING DONE ALL WE COULD A NEGATIVE VOTE WOULD ACCOMPLISH NOTHING EXCEPT TO DAMAGE US CREDIBILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS AS A NEGOTIATOR, ISRAELI MISSION HERE RECOGNIZES IT IS NOW IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE WHOLE MATTER DEFERRED, AS ISRAELIS PUBLICLY INSIST, AND ALLON CONDEMNED IN SPEECH YESTERDAY THAT MAJORITY FOR APPROVAL ALREADY EXISTS. THUS, ISSUE BEFORE US IS WHAT VOTE WILL KEEP US IN POSTURE OF UNHOLDING PRINCIPLE

IN UN FORUM WHILE PROTECTING USG PEACEMAKING ROLE.
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